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Senate

(Legislative day of Thursday, November 16, 1995)

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.

Lord, we accept this admonition as both a prognosis and a prescription for our deepest need this morning. Trust in You is the only healing antidote to tension. We admit that the tension does grow as sessions of the Senate become longer and debate becomes more intense.

And here we are on a Saturday morning with the fresh memories of loss for some and victories for others over the vote on the budget last evening. Some are proud of their success and others feel their pride is wounded. Meanwhile, Government is shut down in the deadlock between the Congress and the President. We carefully tabulate the balance of criticism or confirmation from our constituencies, but the real question is what You think.

Individually and corporately we put our trust in You. We resist the habitual tendency to lean on our own understanding; we acknowledge our need for Your wisdom in our search for solutions we all can support. As an intentional act of will, we commit to You everything we think, say, and do today. Direct our paths as we give precedence to principle over party and loyalty to You over anything else. We need You, Father. Strengthen each one and strengthen our oneness. In the name of our Lord. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The acting majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this morning there will be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. I have been asked by the distinguished majority leader to advise that further negotiations on a continuing resolution during today's session will go forward. Therefore, rollcall votes are possible, but we will keep the Members informed if there are any further developments.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for not to exceed 10 minutes each.

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMAS). The distinguished Senator from Minnesota.

JESSE BROWN WILL NOT BE SILENCED

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, yesterday morning there was an article in the Washington Post. It dealt with some of the debate that is now taking place about the budget and veterans. We can agree to disagree, but there was one piece in this article that really captured my attention, as a Senator from Minnesota. This was:

The conferees sent what they called a "strong message" of displeasure to Veterans Affairs Secretary Jesse Brown, in the form of sharp cuts in his office's staff and travel budget.

Mr. President, I would like to talk a little bit about Jesse Brown, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Jesse Brown is one of our Nation's most able and outspoken veterans advocates. He is a man who is a Marine combat veteran, a Marine combat hero who served our country with honor and distinction. Mr. President, he is a disabled veteran who, long before he became Secretary of what he calls "For Veterans Affairs," was one of the most important voices and strongest voices for veterans, especially disabled veterans in the United States of America.

I would like to make it very clear, as a Senator from Minnesota, that I do not believe these kinds of attacks, petty attacks on his personal office travel budget, will silence Jesse Brown. My colleagues are sadly mistaken, they are profoundly mistaken, if they believe any form of retaliation will silence this Secretary, who is such a powerful advocate for veterans, based upon his own personal life, based upon his service for this country, and based upon his position.

Since taking office in 1993, let me just list a few of the impressive accomplishments of Secretary Jesse Brown, "Secretary for Veterans."

Agent orange—in 1993, a VA-sponsored review conducted by the National Academy of Sciences found that certain cancers and illnesses could be caused by agent orange exposure. The VA promptly responded by presuming service-connection for these diseases—long overdue.

Mr. President, homeless veterans convened the first National Summit on Homelessness Among Veterans. It is a scandal that such a large percentage of our street people and homeless people are veterans. This Secretary, Jesse Brown, will not be silenced.

Persian Gulf veterans fought hard to make sure Persian Gulf veterans were not forgotten, to compensate certain Persian Gulf veterans with

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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